

1 physical retail store for an on-line shopper, comprising the
2 steps of:
3

4 receiving at a web server a request for an item by an on-
5 line shopper;

6 determining via the server an approximate quantity of ~~an~~ the
7 item available for purchase by ~~an~~ the on-line shopper; ~~and~~

1 adjusting via the server the approximate quantity responsive
2 to a quantity-held estimate of a number of units of the item held
3 by in-person shoppers prior to checkout by the in-person
4 shoppers[.] to provide an adjusted quantity;

1 comparing via the server the adjusted quantity with a first
2 threshold; and

1 when the adjusted quantity is less than the first threshold,
2 invoking a corrective action.

1 2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the quantity-held
2 estimate is dependent upon an average number of the item
3 purchased historically during a specified period of time.

1 3. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the quantity-held

1 estimate is dependent upon a time of day.

1 4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the quantity-held
2 estimate is dependent upon a day of a week.

3 5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the quantity-held
4 estimate is dependent upon proximity to a holiday.

1 6. (cancelled)

2 7. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~6~~ 1, wherein the
3 step of invoking includes the step of prompting the on-line
4 shopper to select an alternative item.

1 8. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~6~~ 1, wherein the
2 step of invoking includes the steps of asking the on-line shopper
3 to submit an order for the item; and, if the on-line shopper
4 submits the order, removing the item from stock and revising the
5 approximate quantity.

1 9. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~6~~ 1, wherein the
2 step of invoking includes the steps of monitoring the approximate
3 quantity when the adjusted quantity is less than the first
4 threshold, and informing the on-line shopper when the approximate
5 quantity falls below a second threshold.

1 10. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~6~~ 1, wherein the
2 step of invoking includes the step of instructing an in-house
3 shopping assistant to reserve the item for the on-line shopper.

1 11. (new) A computer program product for instructing a server to
2 operate a combined on-line and physical retail store, the
3 computer program product comprising:

4 a computer readable medium;

5 first program instruction means for receiving at a web
6 server a request for an item by an on-line shopper;

7 second program instruction means for determining via the
8 server an approximate quantity of the item available for purchase
9 by the on-line shopper;

10 third program instruction means for adjusting via the server
11 the approximate quantity responsive to a quantity-held estimate
12 of a number of units of the item held by in-person shoppers prior
13 to checkout by the in-person shoppers to provide an adjusted
14 quantity;

15 fourth program instruction means for comparing via the
16 server the adjusted quantity with a first threshold; and

1 fifth program instruction means for when the adjusted
2 quantity is less than the first threshold, invoking a corrective
3 action; and wherein

4 all said program instruction means are recorded on said
5 medium.

6 12. (new) A method of deploying process software for operating a
7 combined on-line and physical retail store, the method
8 comprising:

9 installing the process software on a web server; and

10 invoking the process software to perform the steps of:

11 receiving at a web server a request for an item by an on-
12 line shopper;

13 determining via the server an approximate quantity of the
14 item available for purchase by the on-line shopper;

15 adjusting via the server the approximate quantity responsive
16 to a quantity-held estimate of a number of units of the item held
17 by in-person shoppers prior to checkout by the in-person shoppers
18 to provide an adjusted quantity;